Annex – Nursery School Program

Nursery School = Ecole Maternelle = Petite Section + Moyenne Section + Grande Section

Nursery school: a unique, fundamental for everyone, cycle

The law on rebuilding school creates a unique cycle for nursery school and highlights its fundamental place as the first step to guarantee success for all students among a “fair-for-all” but “demanding-to-each” school. This school time, even not mandatory, establishes educational and pedagogical fundamentals, on which rely and get developed the students’ future learning, during their entire educational course.
Nursery school is a caring school, even more than the later steps on the educational course. Its primary mission is to stimulate the children to go to school to learn, to assert their personality and to blossom. It relies on a fundamental principal: all children are able to learn and progress. By showing its trust to each child, the nursery school encourages the child to trust its own power to act and think, its ability to learn and success at school and beyond.

1. A school, adapting to young children

The child who comes for the first time to nursery school already possesses « savoir-faire » (know-how), knowledge and world representations : in his family and diverse places where he hung out, he has developed habits, made experiments and get some learning that school takes into account.

1. A school that welcomes children and parents

Since the child enters school, a regular and constructive dialogue starts between teachers and parents; it relies on trust and reciprocal information. To do so, the teaching team defines how they interact with parents, keeping in mind the children’s well-being and success during this first school time, and paying attention to the family diversity. These relationships enable parents to understand the nursery school functioning and specificities (place of language, game role, importance of physical and artistic activities…).
The experience of children parting from family requires all the educational team attention, especially during the first school year. Daily welcoming in classroom is a way to secure the child. The teacher recognizes in each child a person in-the-making and a full interlocutor, whatever the age.

1.2. A school that accompanies the transitions lived by children

Nursery School builds everyday bridges between family and school, between school time and extracurricular time. It has a pivot role through relations established with early-childhood institutions and elementary school.
The pedagogical team organizes school life in coordination with other personals, especially “Atsem” (agents territoriaux specialisés des écoles maternelles = territorial agents specialized in nursery schools).
All the actors involved must work on the link between school time, lunch time and extracurricular time, in order to improve the children well-being and keep on the educational continuity. Although keeping its specificities, the nursery school ensures the best possible relations between the different places of welcome, during the day, the week and the year. It establishes relations with outside partners, especially for territorial educational projects.
It works in coordination with elementary school, especially cycle 2, to implement a true continuity in the learning process, an individual follow-up for each child. It relies on Rased (réseau d'aides spécialisées aux élèves en difficulté = network of specialized aids to students in difficulties) to understand behaviors or lack of progress, and to better help the children in those situations.

1.3. A school that takes into account the child development

Over the nursery school years, progress in languages, in school, in motor and cognitive functions, based on maturity and school situations stimulations is significant and realized following variable rhythms.
Among a same class group, the teacher takes into account, with the common goal perspective, the differences between all the children that can appear with a particular importance in the early years of life. The pedagogical team fits the school out (classrooms, specialized rooms, external spaces,…) to offer children a universe, stimulating for curiosity, responding to their needs, especially for games, movement, resting time and discoveries and to multiply the occasions of sensorial, motor, cognitive and relationship experiments, in safety. Every teacher determines a timetable adapted to the age group and pays attention to alternate moments more or less demanding in body or cognitive implication.
Welcoming time, playtime, rest time, sleeping time and hygienic time are full educational times. They are organized purposely by adults who are responsible for them and give secure marks for young children.

1.4. A school that practices positive evaluation

Evaluation is a regulation tool in the teachers' professional activity; it is not a prediction or a selection tool. It relies on attentive observation and interpretation of what each child does or says. Every teacher must value, beyond the result obtained, the child's course and progress he made compared to himself. He avails each child to identify his successes, to keep tracks of them, to perceive his evolution. He pays attention to what the child can do by himself, with his support (what the child does then often anticipates what he will be able to do by himself in a close future) or the support of other children. He takes into account the differences of age and maturity among a same class group. Adapted to nursery school specificities, evaluation is implemented following modalities defined among the school.Teachers make process, expectations and specific nursery school evaluation modalities explicit for parents.

2. A school that organizes specific learning modalities

At nursery school, teachers work in team in order to define the learning progress over the cycle. They build resources and common tools to have the children live this progress. They make a common repertory of practices, objects and materials (didactic material, toys, books, games) to offer, along the cycle, a varied but coherent choice of situations and cultural universes.
The teacher in his classroom displays varied learning situations: game, problem resolving, training, etc… and chooses them depending on the class group needs, as well as each child's. In any case, especially for the youngest children, he gives a special importance to the observation and imitation of other children and adults. He promotes interactions between children and creates conditions for shared attention, to take into account the other's point of view in order to fit in the learning community. He develops the ability to interact through projects, to realize productions adapted to the children capacities. He knows how to use numerical supports that, as well as other supports, have their right place in nursery school, as long as their objectives and modalities of use suit the learning activity. In any case, situations of common experience are preferable to formal exercises on sheets.

2.1. Learning by playing

Game promotes the richness of common experiences lived by children among the classes of nursery school and feeds all learning areas. It enables children to exercise autonomy, act on real, build fiction and develop imagination, develop motor abilities, experiment rules and varied social roles. It promotes communication with others and the construction of strong friendship links. It can take different shapes: symbolic games, exploration games, construction and manipulation games, collective games, board games, home-made or invented games, etc. The teacher gives significant time to all children to play their activity game. He observes them in their free game in order to better know them. He also offers structured games aiming specific learning.

2.2. Learning while thinking and resolving problems

To make the children think, the teacher confronts them with problems they are able to solve. Whatever the learning area and the moment in class life, he targets situations, asks open questions the children don't have yet direct answer. In their mind, they analyze situations, review their knowledge, inventory possibilities, select. They grope and try answers. The teacher pays attention to the thinking process displayed in speech and actions. He values trials and entertains discussions. These high level cognitive activities are fundamental to give children envy to learn and to make them intellectually independent.

2.3. Learning while exercising

Young children learn over a long time frame and progresses are rarely linear. They often need appropriation time, either through review of known process, or through new situations.
Stabilization needs renewed repetitions in diverse conditions. Learning modalities can go, for oldest children, to training situations or self-training situations, even automation. The teacher then makes sure to explain to children that they are in the process of learning, to make them understand the meaning of the efforts demanded to them and to make them perceive their realized progresses. In any case, the pedagogic choices take into account the children' gains.

2.4. Learning while remembering and refreshing the memory

Mental operations among the young children are not voluntary. Among the youngest, they depend on the emotional aspect of situations and living repetitive events commented and nominated by an adult. These children rely heavily on what they visually perceive to maintain information in temporary memory, whereas starting at 5-6 year old it is the language used to address them that enable them to understand and remember.
The teacher stabilizes information, makes sure it is clear so that the children remember it. He organizes regular returns on discoveries and previous gains to ensure the stabilization, in all areas.
To engage the class into activity is the opportunity to recall previous knowledge on which to rely, to link to different situations already encountered or to similar problems asked to the group. The teacher animates moments clearly aiming to make them learn, especially with nursery rhythms, songs or poems. He values restitution, evocation of

what have been remembered, he helps children become aware that to learn in school is to rally continuously on previous gains to go further.

3. A school where children will learn together and live together

Nursery school structures learning around a central training goal for children: « learn together and live together ». The class and the group constitute a learning community that establishes basis for building a citizenship respectful of secularity rules and open to the world plurality of cultures. It is in this frame that the child is meant to become a student, in a progressive way along the cycle. Children learn to repeat the roles of different adults, the functions of different classes and school spaces, and rules attached to each. They are consulted on certain decisions related with them and discover the basis of collective debates. Nursery school also ensures a first acquisition of societal life principles. Welcoming and schooling handicapped children participate to this goal for these children and also contribute to develop for all a positive look on differences. All adults make sure all children are treated equally all the time. Nursery school builds equality conditions, especially between boys and girls.

3.1. To understand the role of school

Nursery school is a place where the child makes himself progressively familiar with a specific method of learning; this method relies on activities, experiments to his reach, but implies that he gains knowledge or “know-how” with the other children’s and the teacher’s help.

Language, in its different uses, has an important role in this process. The child learns simultaneously to enter a collective rhythm (to do or pay attention to something at the same time as others, to take into account collective orders) that forces him to deny his immediate desires. That way, nursery school initiates to the progressive building of a student posture.

The teacher makes the school requirements understandable by explaining and putting in situations to enable children - and parents – to identify and appropriate them. He promotes cooperation, engagement in effort, perseveration thanks to his and the school team encouragements. He encourages developing personal trials, taking initiatives, learning progressively to make choices.

He helps identify objects on which rely the learning, acquire work habits that will evolve in the future and that children will be able to transfer. For that, he makes explicit the continuity in the learning process, the links between different sessions. To stabilize the first benchmarks, he uses identical processes in his way to questioning the group, makes it obvious for children the activity that will be theirs, to lead them to reformulate what has been said, to produce themselves explanations for others about the task already lived.

The teacher trains children to identify the different learning steps by using terms relevant to their age. He helps them to represent what they are going to do, which tools will be used and following which process. He defines success criteria so that each of them can locate the progress made and perceive the progress still needed to be made.

3.2. To grow as a singular person among a group

To grow as a singular person means to discover the role of the group in one's own path, to participate to the realization of common projects, to learn how to cooperate. It means to progressively share tasks and take initiatives and responsibilities among the group. By participating, the child acquires the taste for collective activities, takes pleasure in exchanging and confronting his point of view to others'. He learns communication and exchange rules. The teacher worries about guiding the collective thinking in order for each to enlarge his own way of seeing and thinking. This way, the child finds his place among the group, has himself recognized as a full being and feel the role of others in the learning process. At first, collectives rules are given and justified by the teacher who defines for the child his rights (to express, to play, to learn, to make mistakes, to be helped and protected…) and his obligations in the school collectivity (to wait his turn, to share objects, to tidy, to respect the material…). Appropriation goes through repetition of ritual activities and a first thinking about their application. Progressively, children are led to participate to the elaboration of collective life rules, adapted to the local environment. Through concrete class life situations, a first sensitivity to moral experiments (feeling empathy, expressing fair and unfair, questioning stereotypes…) is built. Stories read, tales and playlet contribute to it. Displaying fiction characters brings possibilities of diversified identification and allows at the same time a sufficient distance. Along the cycle, the teacher develops the children's ability to identify, to express verbally their emotions and feelings. He pays attention that everyone can develop self-esteem, help each other and share with others.

The five learning areas

Teachings are organized in five learning areas. This organization enables the teacher to identify targeted learning and to implement their interactions in the classroom. Each of these five areas is essential to the child development and must find its place in the daily time organization. As each pedagogic situation remains, from the child's point of view, a situation rich of multiple possible interpretations and actions, it often relies for the teacher on several learning areas.
The area "to mobilize language in all its dimensions" re-affirms the fundamental part of language in nursery school as an essential condition for success for all. Oral language stimulation and structuring, as one, the progressive entrance in the written culture as a second, constitute nursery school priorities and concern all areas.
The areas "to act, to express, to understand through physical activity" and "to act, to express, to understand through artistic activities" enable to develop interactions between action, senses, imagination, sensitivity and thinking.
The areas « to build the first tools to structure thought » and « to explore the world » aim to develop a first understanding of the children environment and to favor questioning. By relying on initial knowledge of their past living, nursery school creates a course that enables them to order their surrounding world, to access usual representations and knowledge that elementary school will complete.
The program establishes, for all learning area, a general definition, states targeted objectives and gives pedagogic indications to help organize the learning progressivity.

1. To mobilize the language in all its dimensions

The word « language » refers to a group of activities used by an individual when he talks, thinks, tries to understand and, progressively, reads and writes. Nursery school enables all children to use these activities by mobilizing simultaneously two language components:

- Oral language: used in interactions, in production and in reception, it makes it possible for children to communicate, to understand, to learn and to think. It is a mean to discover the French language characteristics and to listen to other spoken languages.
- Written language: presented progressively to children until they start using it, it trains them to a certain form of communication which specificities and role in keeping track, anticipating, addressing a missing recipient they will discover. It prepares children to the writing-reading apprenticeship of cycle 2.

1.1 Oral

The child, whatever his mother tongue, from his early childhood and along a long process, acquires spontaneously language thanks to interactions with his surrounding adults.
The teacher, attentive, accompanies each child in his first trials, picks him up on oral productions to bring him better-adapted words and sentence structures to help him progress. The teacher addresses the youngest children with a relatively slow flow of speech; he produces brief, syntax correct and carefully articulated statements. Always attentive to his own language and careful to adapt to the diversity of children's language performances, he progressively expresses in a more complex way. He enables each child to go progressively further the first spontaneous and non-mastered speech to suit more-and-more-organized conversations and to speak in a large group. He knows how to get everybody's attention in activities that will bring them to understand terms and longer-and-longer texts. He puts everybody in the path of languages, French words and sound units consciousness.

Targeted goals and elements of progress

To dare enter in communication

The goal is to make it possible for everybody to say, express an opinion or need, question, tell news. That way, the child learns to enter in communication with others and to make efforts so the others understand what he wants to say. Everybody arrives at nursery school with very hesitating language skills. Between two and four-year old, children mainly express through non-verbal means and learn how to speak. They copy formulations or pieces of speech used to address them and that way, work on the material, the language they listen to, is. After three, four-year old, they keep trying and progress on the syntax and lexical level. They produce more complex statements, linked to longer speech, and more and more adapted to situations.
Around four-year-old, children discover that human beings, including themselves, think and feel, and they do so differently from each other. They then start acting voluntarily on others through language and representing the effect a speech can have: they then understand they must explain and re-explain in order for a recipient to understand, and school should leads them in this discovery. They start asking true questions, understanding jokes and making some. Progresses come with an increase of vocabulary and a more-and-more complex organization of sentences. At the end of nursery school, the teacher can then have with children conversations similar to the ones he has with adults.
Along nursery school, the teacher creates benevolent and securing conditions for all children (even those who don't express or express poorly) to speak, participate in language situations more complex than in ordinary life; he

welcomes “positive” mistakes that highlight mental language reorganization by valuing them and offering reformulation. That way, he contributes to build equity among children by reducing languages discrepancies.

To understand and to learn

Speeches held by the teacher are a mean for children to learn and understand. To understand, they “take” what is in their reach among what they hear, first in the scenes reminding them precise personal experiments, often charged with affect. They are led to progressively get interested to what they previously ignored, thanks to new notions, new cultural objects, even new ways of learning.
Reception times when children work mentally without speaking are full language activities the teacher must research and encourage, because they enable the construction of cognitive tools: to recognize, to concur, to categorize, to contrast, to built mental images from fictions, to link events seen and/or heard in stories or explanations, during structured learning moments, to process words referring to space, time, etc… These activities invisible to any observer’s eye are fundamental.

To exchange and to think with others

Language multi-interactions are common in nursery school: problem solving, collective decisions, stories understanding, etc… There is then argumentation, explanation, questions, interest in what others’ believe, think and know. The teacher then comments on the current activity to highlight the importance and the purpose.
School regularly asks students to evoke, i.e. to talk about what is not present (past experiments narration, class projects…). These evocation situations lead students to mobilize language to have themselves understood without the help of others, they offer a mean to train for more-and-more explicit expression. This language skill relies on a continuous development that has started early and will be fully constituted when they are about 8-year old. The teacher role is to induce a look back and a reflection on comments made by one and the other.

To start reflecting on language and to acquire consciousness

From early age, children are interested in the language or the languages they hear. Spontaneously and without being conscious of it, they make attempts to reproduce sounds, forms and structures in order to enter into communication with the surrounding people. Starting at 3-4 year old, they manage to take distance and become aware of the efforts needed to master a language and make these efforts intentionally. Their attention can then be focused on vocabulary, on syntax and on the French language sound units, which knowledge will be needed to learn how to master the functioning of French writing.

The acquisition and development of a phonology consciousness

To read and write, children must master two major acquisitions: to identify the sound units used to talk French (phonology consciousness) and to understand that writing French is a code to transcript sounds (alphabet principle).
When they learn how to speak, children reproduce words they heard, the sounds of the language used to talk to them. If they happen to play with sounds, it is done randomly. At nursery school, they learn how to manipulate sounds voluntarily, to identify them by ear (therefore to separate them from other sounds), to spot similarities and differences. To be interested in syllables and phonemes, children must take distance with the meaning of the words.
The most easily noticeable unit is syllable. Once children are able to identify syllables common to several words, to isolate them, they can then focus on spotting smaller elements used to make syllables. Because vowel-sounds are easiest to perceive than consonant-sounds and because they sometimes create syllables, it is best to start with them, without wishing to identify all of them in French and without excluding to make some consonant-sounds, among the most accessible, be perceived.
To develop phonology consciousness, the teacher must get the children used to break down voluntarily what they hear in oral syllables: by typing the sound suite, by orally “cutting” words known as syllables, by spotting identical syllable in two-syllable words, then by inverting syllables, still with no material support, neither written nor pictured.
These phonology games can be practiced in large group, but the teacher should favor small group organization for children who don’t participate too much or with difficulties among large groups.
During “grande section”, they regularly devote short sessions to these games, especially with children showing no sign of improvement in the written trials. For those who are able to do it, similar activities can be started for vowel-sounds – especially those that create a syllable in the most commonly used words – and some consonant-sounds. These games and activities structured on sounds constituting the language are just a part of the language activities.

Language diversity awakening

From « moyenne section », they will discover the existence of languages, sometimes very different from the ones they know. During playing situations (games, songs,…) or meaningful situations (already-known stories on DVD for instance), they become aware that communication can be made in a language different from French: for instance, local languages, foreign languages or sign language. Ambitions are modest, but trials made by children, especially

when repeating some elements, must be conducted with rigor.

1.2 Writing

Targeted objectives and elements of progress

It is the nursery school responsibility to give a common culture of writing. Children are led to better and better understand writings within their reach, to discover the language function and nature of these drawings made by someone for someone, to start participating to the production of written texts which particularities they explore. At the end of the cycle, children can display all the knowledge gained in their first autonomous writing trials. It will be groped drawings on which teachers from cycle 2 will rely.

To listen writing and to understand

By preparing children to the first mastered uses of writing in cycle 2, nursery school takes a privileged place to offer them an acquaintance with written language, very different from oral communication. The stake is to get them used to receiving written language in order to understand its content. The teacher takes in charge the reading, positions and impels conversations following the listening. Progressivity mainly shows in the choice of longer and longer texts, far apart from oral; if youth literature keeps a major place, documentary texts are not neglected.

To discover the writing function

The objective is to enable children to understand that the written signs they perceive are equal to language: by receiving it, writing gives access to someone's speech and, by producing it, it makes it possible to address someone missing or to keep a trace of what cannot be forgotten. Writing transmits, gives or reminds information and brings imagination: it has cognitive consequences on the one who reads it. At nursery school, children discover it through situations or projects needing different supports (diverse books, posters, letters, electronic or telephone messages, stickers, etc); they have an even more precise experiment when they witness an addressed writing and they can appreciate by themselves the effects produced by writing on those receiving them.

To start producing writing and to discover its functioning

The teacher is the one who defines the proper moment for children to handle by themselves some of the activities adults lead with writing. And because there is no "pre-reading" at nursery school, this partial handling is made by producing, with a large help from an adult. Every writing production needs different steps, then time to succeed; the oral elaboration phase of the message is fundamental, especially because it makes the necessary transformations from oral words to written phrases obvious. The technique of "dictation to adult" is one of these steps, namely the redaction per se. These early experiments on production bring consciousness of the power given by mastering writing.

To discover the alphabet principle

One of the conditions to learn how to read and to write is to know the alphabet principle mainly used in writing to code, not the sense directly, but the oral (sounds) of what is said. During the three years of nursery school, children will discover this principle (meaning they will understand the relation between letters and sounds) and start to implement it; the nursery school objective is the discovery of this principle and not the apprenticeship of systematic relation between oral and written forms.

The teaching progressivity at nursery school needs to start with writing. Children indeed need to understand how a word transforms into writing, therefore the importance of the relation from oral to writing. The backward way, from writing to oral, will be practiced later when children will start reading. This writing activity can only be made if, at the same time, the child develops a phonology consciousness enabling him to identify the language sound units.

The discovery of the alphabet principle makes the first autonomous writing trials possible at the end of nursery school because it associates complex knowledge to new « know-how »:

- The discovery of the writing function and productions made with help from an adult
- The manipulation of the language non significant sound units, that produces skills used later when children try to write
- In parallel, from "moyenne section", initiation to words drawings
- The discovery of links between the three writing systems (cursive, script, capital) that gives children large possibilities, in manuscript drawing or on word processing.

Autonomous writing is the ultimate goal of these different apprenticeship and discoveries.

To start writing alone

A necessary training before practicing cursive script: graphic exercises

It takes several years for children to acquire the multiple skills necessary to write: to use their look to pilot their hand, to use in a coordinate way the four articulations needed to hold and guide the writing tool (shoulder, elbow, wrist, fingers), to control the drawings, and more importantly, to voluntarily draw abstract signs they fully understand are not drawings but letters, meaning elements of a code transcribing sounds. Graphic exercises, training motor gestures, and writing itself are two different things. The teacher makes sure they are not confused.

In « petite section », graphic exercises, by getting the children used to controlling and guiding their gestures by their look, train them to master the motor gestures necessary for cursive drawing and writing, to take marks in the sheet space. In « moyenne section» and « grande section », they regularly train with precise motor tasks to specifically prepare for writing. They also train for proper writing gestures and they learn to adopt a comfortable posture, to hold the writing tool in an appropriate way, to manage the graphic space (to go from left to right, to maintain spacing,…). The teacher changes models and devotes time to demonstrations to help the reproduction apprenticeship.
Capital writing, graphically easier, is not a systematic teaching; when it is practiced with children, the teacher pays attention to the respect of the letters order and stresses the consequences of the respect or non-respect of this order on what will then be read. Cursive script needs a training to learn how to trace each letter and the letters sequence, pulling the writing tool up wisely. This training can only occurs if the child has acquired a certain motor maturity: if it is sometimes started in “moyenne section” with some, it will have in “grande section” its righteous place, and often in the second part of the year. It will be continued in a very systematic way in “cours préparatoire” (CP). The regular writing of the name gives opportunity to exercise, children having less memory efforts to make and being able to concentrate on the quality of the drawing.
From « moyenne section », and regularly in « grande section », the teacher explains the link between the three writing types (cursive, script, capital). Children train to transcribe words, sentences, short known texts and to type them on computer. Working by two, they learn numerous links between oral and writing: a child names letters and shows, the second looks for them on the keyboard, they control together on the screen, then on the printed version. The objective being to build the symbolic value of letters, the teacher is careful never to isolate the three writing components: the semantic component (the meaning of what is written), the symbolic component (the alphabet code) and the motor component (graphic skill).

Trials of words writing
To value publicly the first drawings of the children who pretend writing, it is to put all the class on the road of symbolism. If it is lines, diverse signs or pseudo-letters, the teacher stresses that he cannot read it yet. From “moyenne section”, the teacher orders the writing of simple words, for instance the name of a character from a story. The goal is for children to grab the teacher’s contributions when he wrote in front of them, or the contribution of the documents displayed in the classroom that have been observed and commented together. The drawings show to the teacher what has been understood by children about writing. Once the drawings done, the teacher reads, or sounds, or says he cannot read it yet. He talks with the child, explains the process used and writes in a canonic form showing the correspondence between sounds and graphic units. This activity is more common in « grande section ». The teacher never lets the children believe that their productions are corrects and he is not looking for a normed orthographic result either: he values trials and finishes with his adult writing below the child trial.

The first autonomous writing productions
When children understand that writing is a code to deliver messages, it is possible to push them to produce written messages. In “grande section”, children start to be resourceful enough to write, and the teacher supports them to do so or value the spontaneous trials. The teacher encourages writing using whatever is in their reach. Once they perfectly know what they want to write, children can look in known texts, use the alphabetic principle, ask for help. The more they write, the more they want to write. The teacher accepts that they mix capital writing and cursive writing to solve phonographic problems. When they don’t settle for only copying known words, but they want to write new words, they resort to different strategies, combining them or not: they can copy pieces taken from other words, draw letters whose sound is part of the word they want to write (for instance vowel), attribute to some letters the phonic value of their name (use K to transcribe the “ca” sound). Separation between words remains a difficult problem to solve until CE1.The first writing trials enable the teacher to see that children start to understand the function and the functioning of writing, even if they will learn the rules only step by step. He comments on the texts with the authors (what they meant, what they wrote, what display their first knowledge on written texts), then he writes in normed written French, highlighting the differences. He also gives to children the means to train, especially with copy in an area purposely furnished for writing (tools, white lined sheets, computer and printer, digital tablet and stiletto, graphic correspondences tables, known texts). An individual collection of the first writings can become a reference folder for each student, to bring when they join CP.

1.3. What is expected from children by the end of nursery school
- To communicate with adults and with other children through language, by making themselves understood.
- To express in a language with correct and precise syntax. Rephrase to make oneself better understood.
- To practice different uses of oral language : to tell, to describe, to evoke, to explain, to question, to offer solutions, to discuss a point of view.
- To tell from memory and in an expressive way, songs and poetry.
- To understand written texts without any other help than the listened language.
- To display curiosity for writing. Be able to say words from a written sentence after the adult reading, the words from a known title of a book or text.

- To participate verbally to the written production. Know that we don't write as we speak.
- To spot regularities in the French oral language (eventually in a foreign language)
- To manipulate syllables.
- To discriminate sounds (syllables, vowel-sounds; some consonant-sound exclusive of the occlusive consonants).
- To recognize alphabet letters and know correspondences between the three ways to write them: cursive, script, capital letters. Copy on a keyboard.
- To write your name in cursive writing, without model.
- To write alone a word using letters or groups of letters borrowed from known words.

2. To act, to express, to understand through physical activity

The practice of physical and artistic activities contributes to the motor, sensorial, affective, intellectual and relational development of children. These activities mobilize, stimulate, enrich the imagination and are occasions to feel emotions and new sensations. They help the children explore their physical possibilities, to enlarge and to refine their motor abilities, to master new balance. They help them build their laterality, the oriented image of their own body and better locate themselves in time and space. These corporal experiments also aim to develop cooperation, to establish constructive relationships with others, in respect of differences, and contribute to socialization. All children participation to all the offered physical activities, the organization and the implemented steps aim to fight against stereotypes and help build equality between girls and boys. The physical activities belong to an education in health by leading all children, whatever their "performance", to feel pleasure in moving and making effort, to better know their body to respect it.

2.1. Targeted goals and elements of progress

When they arrive at nursery school, all children don't have the same level of motor development. They didn't make the same corporal experiments and the ones done had taken different meanings depending on the contexts in which they were made. The choice of varied physical activities, always adapted to the children age, are the teacher responsibility, in his class and cycle programming in order to reach the four characteristic goals of this apprenticeship field. The children's need for movement is real. It is then mandatory to organize daily session (of about 30 to 45 minutes, depending on the activities nature, the chosen organization, the intensity of realized actions, the time of the year, the children's behavior…). Sessions must be organized in cycles of sufficient duration in order for the children to have enough time for a true exploration and the building of significant motor acquisitions.

To act in space, in time and over objects

Step by step, and because he is solicited by the teacher to acknowledge his actions, the child takes pleasure in investing longer in the offered apprenticeship situations. He discovers the possibility to link motor behaviors to ensure continuity in action (take a ball, than run to cross an obstacle, then aim a target to make it fall, then go back to departure point to take a new ball…). He learns to make efforts over time, to look for running longer distance in a given time ("materialized" by a sandglass, a recorded song…).
By acting on and with objects of different shapes, sizes or weight (balls, grain bags, rings…), the child experiments their properties, discover possible uses (throw, catch, make it roll…), try to reproduce the effect obtained through hazardous fumbling. He progresses in perceiving and anticipating an object trajectory in space, which is, even after 5 year old, still difficult.

To adapt balances and movements in varied environments or obstacles

Some of the youngest children need time to conquer new spaces or to engage in unknown environments. Others, on the contrary, invest directly the new proposal without apprehension but also without being aware of the potential risks. In any case, the teacher leads the children to discover possibilities, offers situations to let them explore and enlarge (push) their limits. He invites them to use unusual motor attitudes (to climb, to suspend, to crawl…), to develop new balances (to roll, to float, to fall backwards…), to discover spaces unknown or characterized by their uncertainty (swimming pool, ice-skate ring, park, forest…). For children about 4-year-old, the teacher enriches the experiments with materials requiring balance (skate, stilts…), allowing new modes of moving (tricycles, bikes, scooter…). He attracts the children's attention on their own security and on others', in pedagogic situation which level of objective risk is controlled by the adult.

To communicate with others through expressive or artistic actions

The situations offered to the child let him discover and affirm his own possibilities of improvisation, invention and creation using his body. The teacher uses varied sound supports (music, noises, sound landscapes…) or, on the contrary, develops self-listening and listening of others, through silence. He gives the children access to objects initiating or prolonging the movement (curtains, feathers, sheets…), especially for the youngest. He offers adapted space arrangements, real or fictional, inciting to new experiments. He brings the child to a group realization. For the oldest, going back and forth from actor to spectator role helps them better understand the different dimensions of

the activity, the targeted goals, the progress direction. This way, the child participates to a collective project that can be brought to other spectators, outside the class group.

To collaborate, to cooperate, to oppose

For the young child, school is often the place of the first discovery of motor games lived collectively. Understanding the role of the group, appropriating different organization modes, sharing material and understanding roles need apprenticeship. The common rules (defining space, game goal, rights and interdictions…) are one of the conditions for the pleasure of playing, in respect of others. For the youngest, reaching a common goal is first made through the association of actions realized in parallel, without any real coordination. In the easiest forms of game, it means to understand and appropriate only one role. Playing different roles brings the first collaborations (to empty a zone from its objects, to collaborate in order to exchange them, to transport them, to put them in another area…). Then, are offered situations in which a real antagonism in intentions exists (steal objects; run after players to catch them, to run away to avoid them…) or in which a reversibility of player roles exists (if the cat touches the mouse, the latter becomes the cat instead…).
Other playing situations let the oldest come in contact with others' body, to learn to respect each other and to explore actions in relation with cooperation or specific opposition intentions (to catch, to push, to pull, to stop…). Whether in game of two or group games, all can usefully appropriate varied social roles: referee, observer, responsible of mark or duration of game.

2.2. What is expected from children at the end of nursery school

- To run, to jump, to throw in different ways, in varied spaces and materials, with a specific goal.
- To adjust and link actions and movements depending on obstacles to pass or the trajectory of objects on which to act.
- To move easily in varied environments, natural or arranged.
- To build and keep a sequence of actions and movements, related to other partners, with or without musical support.
- To coordinate gestures and movements with others', during round dances and singing games.
- To cooperate, to play different and complementary roles, to oppose, to elaborate strategies in order to reach a common goal or effect.

3. To act, to express, to understand through artistic activities

This apprenticeship area refers to visual arts (painting, sculpture, drawing, photography, cinema, cartoon, graphic arts, digital arts), to sound arts (songs, vocal and instrumental music) and to performing arts (dance, theater, circus arts, puppets…). Nursery school plays a decisive role in giving access to all children to artistic universes; it constitutes the first step in the artistic and cultural program that each accomplishes during primary and secondary education systems, targeting the acquisition of a personal artistic culture based on common marks.

3.1. Targeted objectives and elements of progress

To develop a taste for artistic activities

Children must have frequent occasions to practice, individually and collectively, in situations of diverse objectives. They explore freely, leave spontaneous traces with tools they chose or the teacher offered, in spaces and moments dedicated to these activities. They make trials that teachers welcome positively. They discover materials, create exploration of new possibilities, adapt to material constraint. All along the cycle, they show interest for produced effects, for action results and evaluate these effects or results compared to the intentions they had.

To discover different forms of artistic expression
Encounters with different forms of artistic expressions are organized on a regular basis; in the classroom, children are confronted with artworks like reproductions, recordings, movies or video captures. Getting familiar with tens of artworks from different time areas in different artistic fields over the first apprenticeship cycle gives the children the opportunity to start building a knowledge that will later get stabilized to constitute progressively a reference in artistic culture. As much as possible, children are initiated to attend exhibition places, movie theaters and performing arts in order for them to understand their social and artistic function and discover the pleasure to be spectator.

To live and express emotions, to formulate choices
Children learn to put words on their emotions, on their feelings, on their impressions, and step by step, to express their intentions and to evoke their realizations as well as others'. The teacher pushes them to be precise to compare, differentiate their point of view and others', to question; he pushes them to explain their choices, to formulate what they are thinking about and to justify what present interest for them.

3.1.1. Plastic and visual productions

To draw
Children must have time to freely draw, in a dedicated space where the necessary tools and supports are available. The teacher brings interest in experimenting different tools, from pens to graphics palette, and favors exchange times to compared produced effects. He let the children identify the answers brought by visual artists, cartoonists, to problems they faced; He offers open assignments to bring diversity in productions then mutualization of individual productions; exchanges over different representations of an identical object enrich practices and help override stereotypes.
Trials or first drawings are saved to help comparisons over time and to help each child to perceive his progress; they can be re-used or prolonged.

To exercise for decorative graphic
Along the cycle, children meet decorative graphics from cultural traditions and varied time areas. They constitute repertory of images, diverse illustrations from which they dig to learn how to reproduce, to assembly, to organize, to link for creative purposes, but also to transform and invent in compositions. The graphic activity led by the teacher leads to execute voluntary drawings, to a fine observation and to a form of discrimination, to develop the coordination between eye and hand, as well as the diversified and adapted gestural ability. These acquisitions help mastering written drawings.

To make plastic compositions, flat and in volume (3D)
To make different plastic compositions, alone or in small groups, we get the children interested in colors, forms and volumes. The work on color is made in varied ways with mixings (from primary colors), with shades and monochrome motifs**,** with superposition, with juxtaposition, using images and different tools (chalk, ink, paint, pigments, naturals…). These experiments come with the acquisition of the appropriated vocabulary to describe actions (darken, lighten, thicken) or produced effects (bold, opaque, transparent…). The work on volume enables children to apprehend very different materials (clay, wood, concrete, cardboard, paper, etc.); an assignment presented as a problem to solve transforms the usual representation of the material used. The work favors the 3-D representation of the world, the research for balance and verticality.

To observe, to understand and to transform images
Children learn step by step how to characterize different images, fixed or animated, and their functions, and to distinguish real from representation, in order to finally have a critical look on a bunch of images they are confronted with from their early childhood. The observation of artworks, reproductions or originals, is made in relation with a regular practice of plastic productions and exchanges.

3.1.2. Sound universes
The goal of nursery school is to enrich the children's creative possibilities and musical imagination, personal or collective, by confronting them to the diversity of musical universes. Listening and production activities are interdependent and belong to a same dynamic.

To play with voice and acquire a repertory of nursery rhymes and songs
By the way they use their voices, children build basis for their future talking and singing adult voice. Nursery school offers situations where they can progressively discover its richness, push past its usual uses by exploring it in a playful way (whispering, screams, breathings, noises, imitation of animals or sound elements of daily life, games of heights…).

Children learn how to sing in group by pairs; the teacher pays attention not to gather too many children in order to work precisely on singing, on the melody, on rhythm and on musical effects.

Children acquire a repertory of nursery rhymes and songs adapted to their age, which they will enrich all along the school time. The teacher chooses it by taking, depending on his objectives, in the child oral tradition or in the repertory of contemporary authors. In the first place, he favors nursery rhymes and songs made of short musical sentences, with simple structure, adapted to the children's vocal possibilities (limited extent, no big melody and rhythmic difficulties). He then can choose more complex songs, especially from a rhythmic point of view.

To explore instruments, to use body sounds

Activities with instruments and body sounds participate to the pleasure of discovering various sound sources and are linked to the evolution of the children's gesture possibilities. Exploration activities mobilize corporal percussions, diverse objects, sometimes taken from daily life, percussion instruments… They progressively help the children master their gestures in order to control their effects. The comparison of simple instruments lead the children to appreciate the produced effects in order to gather instruments into families (those we bang on, those we shake, those we scratch, those we blow in…).

To refine the ear

Listening activities primarily aim at developing sensibility discrimination and hearing memory. They also give basis for first cultural references and favor the development of imagination. They create sessions dedicated to singing and sound productions with instruments. Listening activities can be part of ritualized dedicated times, evolving in their length, during which children discover sound environments and extracts of musical pieces belonging to different styles, culture and time areas, chosen by the teacher. The teacher favors in a first time extracts characterized by strong contrasts (strong or weak sound intensity, fast/slow tempo, high or low-pitched sounds, timbre of voice or instruments...), then artworks with less contrasts. Given assignments orient the children's attention in order for them to learn how to listen more and more subtly.

3.1.3. Performing arts

To practice some activities of performing arts

Artistic activities belonging to performing arts (dance, circus, mime, theater, puppets…) are characterized by the body involvement and bring to children new sensations and emotions. They mobilize and enrich the imagination by transforming usual ways of acting and moving, by developing a use of the body far away from daily and functional modalities. With a practice of these artistic activities adapted to young children, they can bring into play a poetic expression of movement, open their mind to others' way of expressing, to the fact that others express differently their feelings. Through the sessions, the teacher offers them to imitate, invent, gather personal or shared proposals. He leads them to progressively appropriate the scenic space to belong to a collective production. He helps them interact with others, either through rituals at the beginning or the end of the session, during spontaneous compositions during which they improvise, or during a moment of production built with the help of an adult and that the children had memorized. Thanks to the time of observation and exchanges with others, children become progressively active and attentive spectators.

3.2. What is expected from children at the end of nursery school

- To choose different tools, materials, supports depending on the project or assignment and use them by adapting their gesture.
- To practice drawing to illustrate or represent, while remaining true to reality or a model, or inventing.
- To realize a personal composition by reproducing graphics. Create new graphics.
- To realize plastic compositions, alone or in small groups, by choosing and combining materials, by reinvesting techniques and processes.
- To have memorized a repertory of various nursery rhymes and songs and interpret them in an expressive way.
- To play with the voice to explore different timbres, intensity, heights, nuances
- To spot and reproduce, with the body or with instruments, simple rhythmic forms.
- To describe an image, to speak about a musical extract and to express feeling and understanding with adapted vocabulary.
- To offer solutions during situations or projects, creation, problem solving, with the body, the voice or sound objects.

4. To built the first tools to structure the thought

4.1. To discover numbers and their use

Since they are born, children have a felling about sizes that help them compare and approximately evaluate lengths (heights), volumes, as well as a collection of diverse objects ("there are a lot", "a few"…). When they arrive

at nursery school, they discriminate small quantities, one, two, three, especially when they make known cultural patterns (domino, dices). Finally, even if they are able to tell the beginning of a numeral suite, this telling is not a true understanding of quantities and numbers.
Nursery school must progressively lead each of them to understand that numbers can help them not only express quantities (cardinal use) but also express a rank or a position in a list (ordinal use). This apprenticeship requires time and confrontation with numerous situations involving pre-numerical then numerical activities.

4.1.1. Targeted objectives and elements of progress

The construction of the number relies on a notion of quantity, its oral and written codification, the acquisition of the numbers oral suite and the use of enumeration. For young children, these apprenticeships are developed in parallel before being coordinated: the child can, for instance, recite the numerical rhyme without knowing its use for collection numbering.
During the number apprenticeship in nursery school, the number must be built in order to express quantities, to stabilize the knowledge of small numbers and to use the number as a position memory. The teacher favors the very progressive development of each of these dimensions to contribute to the construction of the number notion. This construction cannot be mixed with the construction of numeration and operations that belong to elementary school apprenticeships.

To construct number to express quantities

To understand the notion of quantity implies for the child to understand that quantity is not an object's characteristic but the characteristic of a collection of objects (the child must also understand that the number is used to memorize quantity).
The child first uses a perceptive and global estimation (more, less, same, a lot, a few). Progressively, he goes from the collections aspects to quantities measurement. Comparing collections and producing a collection with the same cardinal as another one are essential activities to learn the number. The number, as a tool for measuring quantities, is stabilized when the child is able to associate it with a collection, whatever its nature, the size of its elements and the space occupied: five indistinctively refers to five ants, five cubes or five elephants.
The three years of nursery school are necessary and sometimes not enough, to stabilize this knowledge by ensuring that the numbers worked on are composed and decomposed. Mastering decomposition of numbers is a necessary condition to the number construction.

To stabilize the knowledge of small numbers

During cycle 1, the construction of quantities up to ten is essential. A work on comparing big collections is not excluded. The stabilization of the notion of quantity, for instance three, is the ability to give, show, evaluate or take one, two or three and to compose and decompose two and three. Between two and four-year-old, to stabilize the knowledge of small numbers (up to five) requires numerous and varied activities on decomposition and recomposition of small quantities (three is two and then one; one and then two; four is two and then two; three and one again; one and then three), on observation and recognition of dice constellations, on expression and recognition of a quantity with the fingers, on the correspondence with a known cardinal collection.
The unity iteration (three is two then one) is built progressively, and for each number. After four-year-old, decomposition and recomposition activities are done on quantities up to ten.

To use the number to define a rank, a position

The number also helps to keep memory of an element rank in an organized collection. To keep in memory the rank and position of objects (third pearl, fifth hoop), children must define a reading direction, a path direction, i.e. an order. The use of numbers relies for oral, on the knowledge of the numerical rhyme and for writing, on the knowledge of number writing.

To build the first knowledge and know-how with rigor

To acquire the oral suite of number-words

For the oral suite of number-words to be available as a resource for numbering, it must be stable, segmented and significantly long.
It must be worked for itself and constitute a pool of orderly words. The knowledge of the oral suite of numbers names is not the apprenticeship of the number itself but contributes to it.
Before 4-year-old, the first elements of the numerical suite can be put in place up to five or six, then progressively extended to thirty at the end of "grande section". Learning numerical rhymes helps remembering the numerical suite, segmenting number-words in language units. These learnings enable the children to tell numbers before and after, the previous and the following number, to become conscious of the link between increasing and decreasing an element of a collection.

To write numbers with figures

In parallel, children meet written numbers, especially during occasional activities of the class life, during games and through a first use of the calendar. The first writings of numbers must not be introduced too early but progressively,

from needs of communicating in the process of solving concrete situations. The apprenticeship of drawing numbers comes with the same rigor as for letters. The progress in the ability to read and write numbers is organized through the cycle, especially starting at 4. The institutional writing code is the ultimate step of the apprenticeship that will be continued in cycle 2.

To count
Counting activities must avoid the numbering-counting but show, in the collection enumeration, that each name of numbers designates a quantity just formed (the child must understand that to show with three fingers is not the same thing as to show the third finger). Later, after 5, the same attention must be taken for the progressive elaboration of quantities and their relationships with numbers in different codes. Children must understand that all quantity is obtained by adding one to the previous quantity (or by withdrawing one from the superior quantity) and that its name comes from forwarding by one in the suite of number names or in the figures writing.
To count a collection of objects, the child must be able to synchronize the telling of the number-words suite with the pointing of objects to count. This ability must be taught with different modalities by changing the nature of the collections and their spatial organization because the strategies are not the same if the objects can be moved or not (put in a box, put on the table) and depending on their disposal (collection organized in space or not, collection organized-lined up on a sheet or not).

4.1.2. What is expected from children at the end of nursery school

To use numbers
- To evaluate and compare collections of objects with numerical and non-numerical procedures
- To realize a collection with a given cardinal. To use counting to compare two quantities, to make a collection of given size or to realize a collection of quantity equal to the displayed collection
- To use number to express a position of an object or a person in a game, in an organized situation, on a rank or to compare positions
- To mobilize analogical, oral and written, conventional or non-conventional symbols to communicate oral or written information on a quantity.

To study numbers
- To understand that a cardinal doesn’t change if its spatial disposition or its elements nature is modified
- To understand that every number is obtained by adding one to the previous number and that it corresponds to adding one unit to the previous quantity
- To quantify collections up to 10 at least; to compose and decompose them by effectively, then mentally, manipulating them. To tell how much must be added or withdrawn to obtain a quantity lesser than 10
- To speak about numbers helped by their decomposition
- To tell the numbers suite up to 30. To read written numbers up to 10.

4.2. To explore forms, sizes, organized suites

Early, young children instinctively distinguish forms (squares, triangles…) and sizes (length, capacity, weight, area…). At nursery school, they build knowledge and marks on some forms and sizes. The approach on flat forms, on objects in space, on sizes, is done by manipulating and coordinating actions over objects. This approach is sustained through language: it enables describing these objects and these actions and favors the identification of the first descriptive characteristics. This knowledge, still limited, constitutes a first approach of geometry and measures taught in cycles 2 and 3.

4.2.1. Targeted objectives and elements of progress

Early, children group objects, either depending on their aspects, or depending on their familiar use or effects. At school, they are pushed to “put together what goes together” to understand that each object can belong to several categories and that some objects cannot belong to these categories.
By observing, comparing, sorting, children are led to better distinguish different types of criteria: mainly form, length, weight, capacity. They progressively learn to recognize, to distinguish solids then flat forms. They start to assess the notion of alignment that they can also experiment during sessions of physical activity. The teacher pays attention to the fact that assessing flat forms is more abstract than assessing solids and that some terms can be confusing (square/cube). The teacher uses a precise vocabulary (cube, ball, pyramid, cylinder, square, rectangle, triangle, circle or disk (to be preferred to “round”)) that children are trained to understand at first, then to use properly, but manipulating mathematical vocabulary is not an objective in nursery school.
Besides, from “petite section”, children are invited to organize suites of objects depending on criteria as forms and colors; the first algorithms offered to them are simple. In the following years, progressively, they are led to recognize a rhythm in an organized suite and to continue this suite, to invent more and more complicated “rhythms”, to complete lacks in an organized suite.

4.2.2. What is expected from children at the end of nursery school

- To class objects depending on characteristics linked to their form. To know how to call some flat forms (square, triangle, circle or disk, rectangle) and to recognize some solids (cube, pyramid, ball, cylinder).
- To order and rank objects depending on criteria of length or weigh or capacity.
- To reproduce an assembly from model (puzzle, paving, solids assembly)
- To reproduce, draw flat forms
- To identify the organization principle of an algorithm and pursue its application.

5. To explore the world

5.1. To find our way in time and space

Since they are born, through their exploratory activities, children perceive instinctively some spatial and time dimensions of their immediate environment. These perceptions enable them to acquire, among their life environment, a first series of marks, to develop expectations and memories of a recent past. This knowledge remains nonetheless implicit and limited. One of the objectives of nursery school is precisely to lead them progressively to consider time and space as dimensions relatively independent from their current activities, and to start treating them likewise. It also leads them to overcome step-by-step their own point of view and to adopt others'.

5.1.1. Targeted objectives and elements of progress

Time

Nursery school aims to built time marks and time sensitivity: short time (the time of an activity with its before and its after, a day) and long time (succession of the days of the week and the month, succession of seasons). The apprehension of very long time (historical time) is more difficult, especially when it concerns the distinction between far away past and close past.

To stabilize the first time marks

For the youngest, the first time marks are associated to recurrent activities of the daily life; that's why it is important to have a regular organization and rituals that mark the passage from one moment to another. These marks enable the teacher to "anchor" for the children the first stable elements of a basic chronology and to offer them a first work on evocation and anticipation by relying on events close to the present moment.

To introduce social marks

From « moyenne section », social marks are introduced and used daily by children to determine the days of the week, to precise events of school life. The teacher leads progressively the children to link together different marking systems, especially moments of the day and hours to objectify time and marks used by the adult (in five minutes, in one hour).

To strengthen the notion of chronology

In « moyenne section », the teacher offers a work on the construction of chronology relying of larger lengths of time, especially the week. He relies on lived events, which progress is tangible for children and which steps can be distinguished, ordered, reconstructed, completed. The activities made in class favor the acquisition of time marks in the language, especially to locate a saying compared to the moment of speech (yesterday, today, now, tomorrow, later…), or the use of corresponding verbs forms. The teacher creates conditions for the time relations of succession, precedence, posteriority, simultaneity**,** to be traduced into adapted verbal forms (before, after, during, way before, way after, at the same time, etc.).
In« grande section », events chosen regarding the class projects (dinosaurs disappearance, start of writing..) or close architectural heritage elements, as well as parents and grand-parents life elements, can be exploited to order some common marks but without taking into account the notion of time.

To raise awareness on the notion of time

The notion of time starts around 4 year old in a subjective way. By using tools and devices offering a more objective appreciation, the teacher leads the children not to measure time as to speak, but to master it by visualizing its flow. Thus, hourglasses, rhymes and song recordings, can give a first apprehension of a given stable duration or a comparison with another one.

Space

Experiment space

Experimenting space relies on the acquisition of a knowledge linked to movements, to distances and to spatial marks elaborated by children during their activities.
The teacher creates conditions for an accumulation of experiments on taking space marks by giving the children the chance to explore space, to travel it, to observe the positions of fixed or mobile elements, the movements of other children, to anticipate progressively their own itineraries through language exchanges. The teacher favors the organization of marks that each elaborates, through action and language, from their own body in order to build progressively an oriented image.

To represent space

By using and producing diverse representations (pictures, models, drawings, maps,…) and also through language exchanges with comrades and adults, children learn how to restitute their movements and to make new ones from oral assignments, understood and remembered. They then establish relations between movements and their representations. The passage to plane representations using drawing leads them to start putting in relation instinctively 3-D perceptions and 2-D codes relying on some geometric forms (rectangles, squares, triangles, circles). These relationships will be studied more precisely at elementary school, but they can already be used to code movements or spatial representations. Moreover, drawings, as well as texts presented on pages or graphic productions, initiate children to locate and to orient in a 2-D space, the one of pages but also of books.

To discover different environments
The teacher leads children to observe their close environment (classroom, school neighborhood) to discover less familiar spaces (countryside, city, ocean, mountain…). The observation of human constructions (houses, shops, monuments, roads, bridges…) follows the same purpose. For the older ones, a first approach of landscape as an environment marked by human activity becomes possible. These situations are occasions to question, to produce images (the digital camera is a pertinent tool), to research information, with the help of the teacher, in documentaries, on websites. This exploration of environment also enables a complete initiation to responsible behavior (respect of the living location, of life, knowledge of the impact of some behaviors on environment...).
From the experiments lived by children at school and outside of it and from the occasions they offer, the teacher also favors a first discovery of countries and cultures to open them to the world diversity. This discovery can be made in connection with the first sensitivity to plural languages.

5.1.2. What is expected from children at the end of nursery school
- To locate lived events one to another and to locate them in a day, week, month or season frame.
- To order a suite of photos or images, to relate a lived situation or a listened fictional tale, by marking succession and simultaneity in an exact way.
- To use adapted time marks (then, during, before, after…) in tales, descriptions or explanations.
- To locate objects compared to oneself, to others, to marked objects.
- To locate oneself compared to others, to marked objects
- In a well-known environment, to do an itinerary, a route from its representation (drawing or code)
- To elaborate first trials of plane representations, communicable (construction of a common code).
- To orient and use properly a sheet of paper, a book or another writing support, depending on the assignment, a goal or a precise project.
- To use adapted spatial marks (behind, before, right, left, over, below…) in tales, descriptions or explanations.

5.2. To explore the world of the living, of objects and of matter
When they enter nursery school, children already have representations that enable them to take marks in their daily life. To help them discover, organize and understand their surrounding world, the teacher offers activities that lead children to observe, form more rational questions, build relations between observed phenomenon, to predict consequences, identify characteristics susceptible to be categorized. Children start to understand what distinguish the living from the non-living. They manipulate, build, to get familiar with objects and matter.

5.2.1. Targeted objectives and elements of progress

To discover the living world
The teacher leads children to observe different manifestations of animal and vegetal life. They discover the cycle made of birth, growth, reproduction, aging, death by taking the necessary care of animals and plants raised in the classroom. They identify, name or regroup animals depending on their characteristics (hair, feather, scale…), their mode of moving (walking, crawling, flying, swimming…), of their environment, etc..
Through the physical activities they have at school, children learn to better understand and master their body. They understand that it belongs to them, that they have to take care of it to keep it in shape and favor their well-being. They learn to identify, designate and name the different parts of their body. This education to health aims to acquire the first knowledge and know-how related to a healthy lifestyle. It involves a first approach to food questions that can be linked to an education of taste. Children choose and develop their sensor aptitudes, use them to distinguish realities, different depending on their olfactory, gustative, tactile, auditory and visual characteristics. Among the oldest ones, it means comparing, ranking or ordering these realities, to describe them thanks to language, to categorize them.
Finally, questions on the protection of the living and its environment are raised, in the context of the discovery of different environment and a concrete initiation to a responsible attitude.

To explore matter

A first apprehension of the concept of matter is favored by direct action on materials, starting in « petite section ». Children regularly train on various actions (to decant, to knead, to mix, to transport, to model, to sharpen, to cut, to break up, to assembly, to transform). All along the cycle, they discover the effects of their actions and they use some matter or natural (water, wood, soil, sand, air,…) or human-made (paper, cardboard, semolina, fabric,…) materials.
The activities lead to mixing, dissolving, mechanical transforming, or under the effect of heat or cold lead progressively to tackle some matter and materials properties, some aspects of their possible transformations. They are opportunities for discussions among children and with the teacher, and make ranking, designating and defining the qualities possible, by acquiring the appropriate vocabulary.

To use, make, manipulate objects
The use of instruments, varied objects, tools, leads children to develop series of abilities, to manipulate and discover their uses. From “petite section” to “grande section”, children learn to link an action or the choice of a tool to the effect they want to obtain: to glue, to thread, to assembly, to operate, to button, to cut, to balance, to hold a script tool, to fold, to use a template, to manipulate a computer mouse, to act on a digital tablet… All these actions complicate all along the cycle. To reach the goal assigned to them or they give themselves, children learn to integrate progressively the chronology of the required tasks and to order a suite of actions; in “grande section”, they are able to use an illustrated instructions note or construction sheet.
Mounting and dismantling in construction games and model realizations, making objects, contribute to a first discovery of the technological world.
Multiple uses of instruments and objects are opportunities to witness physical phenomenon, especially by using simple optic instruments (especially magnifying glass) or by acting with springs, magnets, pulleys, gears, inclined planes… Children need to act several times to witness the regularities of the manifestations of physical phenomenon they will study later (gravity, attraction of two magnetized poles, effects of the light, etc.)
All along the cycle, children become aware of the risks linked to the use of objects, especially for the prevention of domestic incidents.

To use numerical tools
From their early childhood, children are in contact with new technologies. The role of school is to give them marks to understand their use and start to use them in an adapted way (digital tablet, computer, digital camera…). Targeted researches, via internet, are made and commented by the teacher.
Class or school projects implying relationships with other children favor experiments on long distance communication. The teacher evokes with children the idea of a network world that enables them to communicate with other people, sometimes far far away.

5.2.2. What is expected from children at the end of nursery school
- To recognize the principle steps of an animal or vegetal development, in a situation of observation of reality or on an image.
- To know the essential needs of some animals or vegetal.
- To locate and name different parts of the human body, on its own body or on a representation.
- To know and implement some rules for a healthy body and lifestyle.
- To choose, use and know how to designate tools and materials adapted to a situation, to specific technical actions (to fold, to cut, to glue, to assembly, to operate…).
- To realize constructions, to make simple models depending on a map or instructions.
- To use numerical objects: digital camera, tablet, computer.
- To take into account the risks of a close familiar environment (dangerous objects and behaviors, toxic products).